

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This paper is submitted in response to the Office Action dated March 3, 2008. At that time, claims 1, 5, 6, 15, 16, 24, 26, 27, 35, 37-40 and 49-54 were pending. In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 35 as containing an informality. By this paper, this issue has been corrected. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested. In the Office Action, claims 1, 5, 6, 16, 16, 24, 26, 27, and 54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Claims 1, 5, 6, 24, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ochiai et al in view of Shiraki. Claims 27 and 54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ochiai et al in view of Shiraki and in further view of Lang. In the Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 35, 37-40 and 49-53 and indicated that claims 15 and 16 would be allowable if the § 112 rejection could be overcome.

I. § 112 Rejection

Claims 1, 5, 6, 16, 16, 24, 26, 27, and 54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Specifically, the Examiner indicated that there were “several cases of double inclusion” and that the “claims make mention to deployable reaction surfaces being components of the airbag module, where the airbag module is clearly a separate component from the steering wheel.” Further, the Examiner indicated that the “claims mention trim covering and contacting the deployable reaction surface...[but] the specification does not appear to support this assertion.” Office Action, pp. 2-3.

As a result of this paper, the claims have been amended to correct for these issues. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to only include the limitations of original claims 1, 15, and 17. Such an amendment corrects for the issues raised under § 112. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejections Based Upon the Cited References

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 5, 6, 24, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ochiai et al in view of Shiraki. Claims 27 and 54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ochiai et al in view of Shiraki and in further view

of Lang. As a result of this paper, claims 5, 6, 24, 26, 27 and 54 have been canceled. With respect to claim 1, this claim has been amended to incorporate the language of allowable (original) claim 17. The Examiner has already indicated that this claim language is allowable in many of the prior Office Actions, including the Office Action dated June 28, 2007. Accordingly, allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

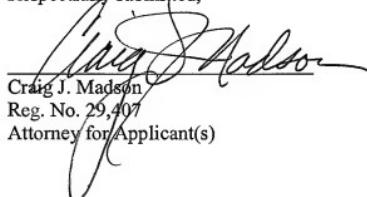
III. New Claims

New claims have been added that depend from claim 1. These claims are modeled after allowable (now canceled) claims 18-23. Favorable consideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims that may be clarified by telephone, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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